

REMARKS

Initially, applicant would like to express his appreciation to the Examiner and his supervisor for discussing the present application on January 11, 2006. During the interview, applicant's representative explained operation of the present invention, and how the claims differ from the proposed combination.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1 – 9 as being unpatentable over RIDDLE in view of BATTLENET. Applicant respectfully traverses.

Independent claims 1, 5, and 9 expressly recite storage of messages in an intermediate database. In contrast, RIDDLE teaches video conferencing in a peer to peer environment. As discussed during the interview, it is submitted that such a difference by itself is enough to render all of the claims patentable over any combination involving RIDDLE.

Nevertheless, it is further submitted that RIDDLE does not disclose or suggest the flow of the claimed setup information. In claim 1, for example, a chairman's terminal stores setup information for setting an area on the database. Then, the chairman's terminal transmits the setup information to the guest's terminal. Claim 1 also recites transmitting setup information (which is part of the access request signals) from the guest video game terminals to the database. The password and account number of RIDDLE are not described as stored, transmitted to the guest video game terminal and also transmitted from the guest terminal to a central database. Thus, for this additional reason, it is believed that the claims are patentable over any combination involving RIDDLE.

The claims emphasize the ease of using the present invention. As discussed on page 14, lines 1 – 11, the present invention eliminates the cumbersome operations

typically entailed in setting up and joining a chat room. Such cumbersome procedures are particularly problematic when using video game terminals, which have a limited input system.

During the interview, applicant's representative stated that RIDDLE requires complex messaging. The examiner's supervisor suggested that the messages may be background processing. At that time, applicant's representative said he would further review the reference to determine whether the messages are, in fact, background processing.

Upon further review, applicant notes that col. 11, lines 33 – 41 of RIDDLE describe the *member* sending either a Capabilities message or an Auxiliary message. The member then sends a Hello message followed by a Call message or a Join message. The passage describes what actions the member takes. Because video game terminals are not part of the RIDDLE system, reducing user input does not appear to be an object of RIDDLE. Thus, it is submitted that the disclosed messaging is not all background processing, but rather requires active participation by the members. In contrast, the claims recite action taken "*solely* in response to ..." It is believed that transmitting the access request signal and transmitting the invitation signal *solely* in response to the instructions of the chairman/guest is not taught or suggested by RIDDLE.

Finally, it is submitted that the reasoning provided for the proposed combination is improper. RIDDLE does not pertain to video game terminals, video games or chat. Thus, there would be no need within the system of RIDDLE to allow for centralized chat rooms for video game terminals to set up games, contrary to the Examiner's assertions. Thus, no motivation for the proposed combination exists.

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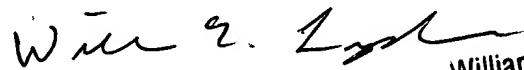
Consequently, for at least these reasons it is requested that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of the independent claims and provide an indication of their allowability.

Dependent claims 2 - 4 and 6 - 8 are also believed to recite further patentable subject matter of the invention and therefore are also believed allowable over the prior art. As such, allowance of the dependent claims is deemed proper for at least the same reasons noted for the independent claims, in addition to reasons related to their own recitations.

Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the outstanding rejections and an indication of the allowability of all of the claims in the present application.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this Response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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